

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

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S. N. K.

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pieces and incantations must also be placed within that time range. Several tablets were plans--a few of fields but more of buildings. A rather fragmentary one seems to be of a temple and shows podia in cellae. The most intriguing of the "plan" tablets, however, give/s portions of a building/s containing elaborate mazes. How we would like one complete with labels specifying whether such a building had been real or was only for play or fantasy! To add to the one, no I believe two, found two years ago, we now have three more pieces of Esarhaddon barrel cylinders. Fragments of three or four lexical texts--the best one belonging to a late syllabary and coming from the Ekur--round out the cursory look at the cuneiform tablets.

What stopped the flow of tablets from the fill, of course, was the fact that Jabbar, our driver, was sent to Hillah on February 10 to buy bowls--he got 90--in which to bury our tablets in sand for firing. The quality of the bowls from Diwaniyeh had been so poor that in each firing almost every one of the 14-16 bowls in each load cracked so badly that it had to be discarded. Laying in such an ample supply was fatal to further finds!

From tablets let us move on to objects. On January 29 the fill above the Ur III level produced a fragment of an Early Dynastic stone statue preserving the shoulders and a part of the front and back of a figure once probably 14-16 inches high. The head was missing but construction of the figure showed that it had been doweled into place and had been made from a separate piece of material. Most of the fragment is covered inscription and it names EN.NA.II, king of Kish. Among the tablets interestingly enough there was one--probably an Ur III copy--written in a very elaborate archaic script giving the name of this same EN.NA.II. A couple of days later there appeared the base of a life sized Shu-Sin statue in black diorite. It had been broken in antiquity and used by the Parthians as a sinara for the main eastern doorway of the temple erected by them. Of the statue itself only the positions of the feet remained. Although significant parts of the inscription were destroyed long ago, Shu-Sin's name was quite clear.

The objects now shift from stone to copper/bronze. On the west side of the Ekur late in January in one of the complex of rooms Khalifa uncovered a "set" of seven dogs measuring in L. 4.5-9 cm. and in H. 5.5-8.5 cm. One shows a man standing with his arm around the neck of a seated canine. Each dog appears to represent a distinct breed and a different pose. From the headdress and beard of the man in question we have tentatively called the lot Assyrian. The cache seems to have been discarded where it was found. The room yielded nothing else at that particular level.

On January 28 beneath the western tower of a niched temple doorway leading south from a big courtyard in the Inanna temple Khalaf Jasim discovered our first Shulgi foundation deposit of this season just as his father, Jasim Salih, had found the first of all the foundation boxes two years ago. The Parthians had left just two courses of foundation libn above the capping bricks of the box. The contents of the box were the now familiar copper figurine, the stone

miniature of a plano-convex brick, chips of stone, etc. The cloth in which the statuette was wrapped was fastened near the right shoulder with a small sliver of wood. Since our railroad ran over the location of the eastern tower of the same doorway, it was three weeks later before we succeeded in getting the second Shulgi box and this by an even narrower margin than before. This time the Parthians had taken the uppermost of the three capping bricks of the box! The contents of the box, however, were intact. As the score now stands, we have a pair of Shulgis and a lone Ur-Nammu. From our point of view the Ur-Nammu is badly in need of a companion!

What was the state of the excavation itself when I left? Approximately two-thirds of the Inanna temple of the Ur III level was laid bare. The farther south we went the worse the state of preservation of the temple had become. In fact just beyond the towers where we got the pair of Shulgis a big E-W cut went completely below the temple's foundations. After another two or three meters very scrappy bits of wall appeared once more. From these bits, however, no architectural sense could any longer be made. It was our decision, therefore, to square up the S end of our dig just beyond the line of the aforementioned E-W cut and to put in perhaps a few additional trenches to make certain that nothing was being missed. If the trenches did not yield something worth while, the Inanna temple of Shulgi (Level IV) was finished as far as we were concerned. Attention very early in March was to be turned to the Early Dynastic temple of Level VII of which we had at least a magnificent courtyard during the 1955-56 season. Levels V and VI had been almost completely destroyed by the construction of Level IV. Level VII may suffer this same fate because as it goes S it rises which means that the chances of the Level IV foundations cutting into it increase. We can only wait to see what George writes us about the events of the month of March. All of us agree that the Ur III Inanna temple would have been magnificent if the Parthians had just left Nippur alone. As it is we have a little more than half its plan and know it to have been one of the biggest, if indeed not the largest, of all the Ur III temples so far known.

Work was also continuing on the west side of the Ekur near the ziggurat and will go on there as men are available until the end of the season. The complexity of the whole W side of the Ekur just keeps on growing. No western gate had yet been found, but discovery of such a gate seemed promising. Jim was mapping the Kassite level in this area.

This was the state of affairs at Nippur during the final week of February of this the 1957-58 season with six weeks of digging remaining.

On February 4 we did visit the Department of Antiquities excavation at Willayah two hours to the E of us. As I reported earlier, Willayah is a mound of great extent but of rather low height. It is one of the most pock-marked tells that I have seen in all southern Iraq. This was one of the reasons that the Department wanted to have a look. Since Willayah lay within the bounds of a great sheikh's

private realm, it has not previously had an antiquities guard. From now on it will be under surveillance. When we arrived, their dig was in the process of closing. Nevertheless, Sayid Khalid Ahmed extended us every courtesy. He conducted us to the three points where they had worked most and showed us their finds. Each of the three spots yielded remains from a different period with each being very near the surface. The oldest was an Early Dynastic structure which had been destroyed by fire. Not enough had been dug, however, to make clear what the purpose of the building was. Second, there was an Akkadian house which had been the point of their greatest effort and of their biggest reward. This house had also suffered conflagration. From a floor in one portion of this house had come more than twenty Akkadian cylinder seals, a lovely ivory figurine, and one or two Akkadian tablets. Not all of the seals were well preserved, but a few were very striking. The ivory represents a nude female with the head and parts of the arms and legs missing. Although fragmentary it has real beauty and character. It measures approximately four inches in length. I trust that an early report with photographs of both the seal impressions and ivory plus other interesting items will appear in Sumer. Third, there was an Ur III structure made of a high percentage of stamped and baked Shulgi bricks. It was about 2.5 m. W. x 4 m. L. x 1.5 m. H. There was no entrance and, as far as we could see, no drains either into or out of. They had called it a "septic" tank, but its context requires more digging. It did not have a baked brick floor and naturally had no top when it was found.

The dig which lasted 25 days has opened to us a new site of importance, a site whose ancient name we still do not know. We hope only that the Department will find it within its resources to resume work at Willayah in the near future on an even more impressive scale.

On Washington's Birthday we made our regular visit to Warka. There we found the work continuing with its usual high standard under Professor Lenzen's experienced direction. Outside (?) the town itself they were digging a second tomb similar to the one which they dug last year and where they found the gold wreath so well published in color in Sumer. In fact upon the day of our visit they had struck the tomb chamber of the second tomb. Its top was covered with bitumen and contained a big sag. It was not to be opened for some days, however, because H. E. Dr. Naji al-Asil, the Director General of Antiquities, wished to be present.

In the expedition's museum we saw the season's finds to that moment. Uruk tablets, for example, were being brought in in considerable numbers that very day. Three pieces were outstanding. First, there was the biggest cylinder seal that I have ever seen. Its diameter was at least 1.5" and its length a minimum of 4". Cut in a green stone its design was not impressive until rolled. Then it showed very plastic animals with a big bird/s of some kind hovering above them. It belonged to some phase of the Uruk period. Second, a geometric nude female figurine about 9" H. was beautifully modelled in alabaster. It was well preserved in every detail except for a missing head. The arms, for example, were extended straight down the sides of the figure and were shown by slight relief. At the ends of

the arms appeared only semi-circles. No attempt was made to model either hands or fingers. Don says it has Egyptian characteristics and several said that if it had not been excavated they would have considered it a fake. Third, there was a limestone statuette of a male figure with headdress, inlaid shell eyes, a bushy Santa Claus type beard, clearly delineated muscles, broken, as I recall, between the hips and knees. The preserved part, and the condition of that is excellent, measures perhaps 7-8" H. It would appear to be prior to Old Babylonian and post-Gudea. The interesting thing is that it was found inside a Seleucid jar which was capped by an inverted Uruk bevel rimmed bowl!

Near the location of the still enigmatic structure of two years ago which was thought to be a tomb but which yielded no corpse, Professor Lenzen has found what he calls Jemdet Nasr riemchen (not true riemchen because they are not quite square in section) in situ with bitumen for mortar. In the same area they also found 800 grams of gold in rough ingot form. What a treasure if it had been worked into a beautiful object!

Don and George remained at Warka for two days and came home with a much better impression than we could gain in a few hours. The work of Herr Schenk, the young but ingenious photographer, was high on their list of praise.

February 14 marked the announcement of the Federation of Iraq and Jordan. Since that was a Friday, the next two days were added to make a three day national holiday. On those two days all except Professor Goetze and I went to visit the magnificent Islamic ruins of Ukhaidhir in the desert to the W of Kerbela. They also took in Kerbela itself, Qufa, and Najaf before returning from a successful two day trip.

In the past one of our complaints has been that none of the official American family in Iraq has made any effort to come and see what we were doing. This year thanks to the Ferneas (friends from the University of Chicago who have lived in nearby Dagharah for more than a year) and to improved roads that situation is beginning to be corrected. First came the N.G.Thachers. He is the political officer at the U.S.Embassy. Captain Michael Orlando, Assistant Air Attache, and a group of other American friends appeared on the same day. On Sunday B. J. Fernea brought the Shelley Turners. He is engaged in community development work for Point Four. While I was showing them the mound, Lt. Gen. and Mrs. Daniel Campbell and their three daughters arrived, so I started over with the whole group. Later they saw all our antiquities and how we process cuneiform tablets. Other visitors, although this is hardly the correct word for colleagues, included Shirley Lyon from the Oriental Institute, Hans Halbaek, the Danish grain specialist, and Mohammed Ali Mustafa from the Department, all of whom are associated with the Institute project at Khafajeh. We welcome the visits of all guests, since it may help us to create a greater interest in our work.

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